



# REVERENCE IN MUSIC



Distinguished recording studios around the world  
equipment, engineers, and some of the artists that use them

INSIGHTS BY

Ed O'Malley

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Reverence in music  
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# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b>	8
<b>Introduction</b>	11
What is a Recording studio?	13
The world's first recording studio	14
What makes a good recording studio?	15
<b>Studios (A –Z)</b>	
Air Studios	19
Abbey Road Studios	20
ARC Recording Studios	21
Castle of Doom Studios	22
CaVa Studios	23
Capitol Studios	24
Church Studios	25
Electric Lady Studio	26
IBC Studios	27
Metropolis Studios	28
Miloco Studios	29
Rockfield Studios	30
Rolling Stones Mobile Studios	31
Sun Studios	32
That SP Studios	33
Trident	35
Tileyard Studios	36
<b>Summary</b>	38
<b>Further reading</b>	40
<b>Glossary</b>	42
<b>References</b>	48

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# Preface

I have always been fascinated with music creation and recording studios since a young child. After watching my favorite bands in the 90s/early 2000s bands Greenday, Good Charlotte, The Cranberries, and more. I had the opportunity through various music television channels to see some of them in recording studios. All the buttons and faders and how their interactions in different applications and amounts shape the sound of a mix.

As I began to embark on a music career, learning to play piano and guitar while joining more than a few high school bands, I frequented many different recording studios. After studying music performance, I became intrigued in the music creation process which then eventually led me to want to create my own recording studio. I began looking into existing studios for design inspiration as well as the best equipment for functionality. I found myself researching top recording studios globally and noticed that many studios did not appear in formal books like the ones of an earlier era. Nor did they get awards or official honours like other notable counterparts.

Yet, I have found many of them to be in possession of the same artist credits, equipment, and each their own legacies. Which, in turn, has given me great insight into how to run a recording studio in the 21st century.

I felt it only right to share my findings and create an updated list for 2021, and hope others may find the information helpful.



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# Introduction

## What is a recording studio?

A recording studio is a purpose-built environment used for sound recording, mixing, and audio production of instrumental or vocal musical performances, spoken words, and other sounds. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from small rooms able to record a single vocalist or instrumentalist to larger spaces that could house a full orchestra. For optimum results it's recommended that both recording and monitoring (listening and mixing) spaces are acoustically treated for better referencing.

The typical recording studio consists of a room called a live room (for instruments and vocals), a vocal room (for lead vocal singing), and a control room (for recording, editing, mixing, and mastering. The engineers and producers listen to the live or playback of "tracks" on high-quality monitor speakers or headphones.

In professional settings, there will be smaller rooms called "isolation booths" to accommodate loud instruments (drums, guitars, amps, etc) or to provide "drier" rooms for recording vocals or quieter acoustic instruments.

When the personal computer (PC) became popular, the Internet emerged, music streaming networks evolved, and audio recording went from analog to digital. Analog gear was bulky, cumbersome, and costly. The gear was operated by turning knobs rather than clicking a button. Compression and EQ were once standalone hardware units; now, they're either built into your DAW or available as a software addon.

Music since the advent of digital audio has allowed equipment and software to be more accessible. Hardware has become lightweight, compact, and reasonably priced. Compared to an earlier era of analog recording studios, the tape machines, audio consoles, monitors, patch bays, and other equipment which was bulky and cost thousands and thousands of dollars. This price difference allowed the general populous accessibility to music creating tools and gave birth to new music genres. Most notably related to electronic music, which has spawned live DJs and electronic dance music.

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## The world's first recording studio

The recording studio has its origins in 19th-century inventors, including Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham, who laid the foundation for the phonograph industry. Recording studios were springing up all over the world by the time the First World War broke out, including the first Okeh Records studio in New York, founded by Otto KE Heinemann in 1918. Musicians were recorded in real-time as they performed or sang, and the performance was preserved directly on master discs at the time. The electronic mixing of microphones and amplifiers to create a single signal was a breakthrough during that decade. Victor, Colombia, and HMV were among the first record labels to take advantage of the opportunity to record electrically and organize an enterprise to manufacture and market the records that were now mass-market items.

Record labels concentrated their efforts in the 1930s on creating and distributing film soundtracks. However, with the widespread use of tape as a recording medium in the 1940s, the idea that recording studios could play a key role – in terms of equipment and atmosphere – in the development of great music gained traction (when thermos plastic allowed for considerable improvement in the sound quality of recording). Companies like RCA, Decca, Universal Recording Corporation, and Columbia Records started to concentrate on improving studio techniques. RCA had studios in New York, Chicago, and Hollywood. Significant independent studios such as Radio Recorders in Hollywood, Gotham Studios in New York, and The Barn in Nashville arose during the post-war period.

When the advent of FM car radios, home FM receivers and amplifiers peaked in the late 1960s ushering in the stereo age. FM radio had overtaken AM radio in audience size by 1979, thus increasing the demand for recording studios.

## What makes a good recording studio?

There is a plethora of recording studios around the world. Research has shown that studios are judged by many factors and not limited to sound quality. A professional service is highly sought amongst musicians as well as an environment that inspires creativity. I have listed below a summary of my findings.

A great reputation.

From experience, most musicians and music affiliates will share stories from studio sessions and/or the engineers/producers they've worked with, so I would recommend asking the above-mentioned for information. Reading the testimonials of former clients can also help you get a better idea of a studio's abilities.

They'll have cutting-edge technology and applications.

In a fast-moving technological industry, software, plugins, and more can fast become inundated. Although certainly debatable, a general rule for buying/using music equipment of high quality;" Quality brands, make quality music." Be sure to think about the recording studios' facilities and software for reference.

A professional creative work environment.

This can come in many shapes and sizes, but ultimately may all have a different feel. Some studios are huge acoustically treated complexes with a number of rooms, while others offer a more intimate setting with specialized functions for minor musical work. So it helps to know what your audio project is likely to entail to know which suits and make the right decision.

## What professionals say about recording studios

I have collected quotes from several music professionals on recording studios and the best way to approach the recording process for creativity, productivity, efficiency, and desired optimum results.

**"If you had a sign above every studio door saying, 'This Studio is a Musical Instrument,' it would make such a different approach to recording." – Brian Eno**

Brian Eno, who recorded albums for U2, Devo, and Talking Heads, was one of the first to recognize the true musical potential of recording studio equipment. "Most studio units – historically regarded as simple devices for altering or changing a fixed sound – can be employed as instruments in their own right," he says, and anyone who has heard his productions or solo recordings knows how powerful this approach can be.

**"It's that element of surprise. When you lose control, you discover new things." – Daniel Lanois**

It's tempting to try and manage every aspect of the studio, but Daniel Lanois reminds us that losing control can be beneficial. Lanois' body of work, from his own albums to his production work for artists like Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Willie Nelson, and U2 is full of surprises.

**"When the ideas are coming, I don't stop until the ideas stop because that train doesn't come along all the time." – Dr. Dre**

According to Dr. Dre, who has collaborated with hip-hop artists such as 50 Cent, Eminem, and Kendrick Lamar, studio work can feel all-consuming at times. In reality, Dre claims that a lack of sleep has led to some of his best ideas: "I've been up for 79 hours, making. It's almost like a high when the flow is going. You don't want it to come to an end. You don't want to sleep because you're afraid you'll miss something."

**"You make your mistakes to learn how to get to the good stuff." – Quincy Jones**

It's tempting to believe that great people never make mistakes, but the truth is that most of the time, they just don't let us hear them. Quincy Jones, who has worked with legends such as Michael Jackson and Frank Sinatra, has undoubtedly made and will continue to make several errors in his pursuit of the "right stuff."

**"If you haven't got a good sense of humor, life's not worth living." – George Martin**

A strong sense of humor will help direct the decisions in the studio, in addition to making life more enjoyable – at least, that's what happened when George Martin first started working with The Beatles. "I didn't know [the Beatles] from Adam, they didn't mean anything to me," Martin said of his first encounter with the now-legendary mop-tops. So when we first met, it was a little one-sided, but they had that idiotic sense of humor that I enjoy as well, and that made me want to be with them."

**"Aim for the superlative every time, and they'll thank you eventually. If not, you'll thank yourself either way." – Shojon**

Always aim for better, try new things to expand and enhance your skillset, and even if you don't receive appraisal right away for your efforts. You will thank yourself, for broadening your knowledge and experience. Multi-faceted creative Shojon is a testament to his words with a solid technical ability in all things audio-visual, working with global entertainment acts D12, Samantha Mumba, and Macy Gray, as well as curating several YouTube music series featuring X factor contestants, Gabrielle and Wiley.

**"I think the hardest thing to overcome is judging yourself and being your own worst critic." – Nile Rodgers**

We're all our own worst critics, so it's also important to remember that even the most popular artists are prone to self-criticism. We all have permission to give our inner critic a break if Nile Rodgers can create Daft Punk's Random Access Memories while remaining self-critical.

**"It's a big theme in my life, learning about myself and being a better person. *I'm a work in progress; I have revelations every day.*" – Rick Rubin**

It's not all about making music sound better in the studio. It's often more important to work on your personal growth than getting the perfect snare tone. At least, that seems to be Rick Rubin's tactic, known for his work with Public Enemy, Run-D.M.C., Johnny Cash, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers, among many others.



These producers show us that there's more to creating a great-sounding project other than fiddling with the knobs and faders in the usual methods at a workstation.

## Top Tips

1. Have Fun
2. Don't be too judgemental
3. Don't be afraid to make mistakes
4. Aim for the superlative
5. Lose control

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# Air Studios

George Martin and his business partner, John Burgess, formed AIR Studios (AIR stands for Associated Independent Recording) in 1965. Despite its dated appearance, it has been unequally designed with unique features. It has been used by some of the industry's most commercial artists due to its ability to reach high standards alongside those pleasant high frequencies and demands.

## **AIR Studios notable engineers include:**

### *Chris Barrett*

Chris Barrett is one of the industry's most respected Pro Tools recordists and score editors. He's collaborated with orchestras and choirs on a number of film soundtracks and scores.

### *John Prestage*

John joined AIR in 2011 and is currently working on a number of high-profile film and music projects. He has worked as a Pro Tools recordist on several big film scores.

### *Laurence Anslow*

Laurence entered AIR in 2011 after graduating from the University of Surrey's Tonmeister course. Since then, he's worked as a Pro Tools recordist on many high-profile projects, including Hans Zimmer's *Dunkirk*, Daniel Pemberton's *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*.

## **Artists that have made use of AIR Studios:**

- Dua Lipa
- Katy Perry
- Fergie
- Jake Bugg
- Adele
- Mumford & Sons
- Coldplay
- Ellie Goulding

AIR Studios Lyndhurst is one of the only few studios in the world with complete orchestral recording capabilities. Having composed the Oscar-winning scores for *Atonement* and *Grand Budapest Hotel*, as well as scores for *Love Actually*, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, *Darkest Hour*, *Wonder Woman*, *Interstellar*, *Casino Royale*, *Doctor Who*, *Sherlock*, and *Black Mirror*.

# Abbey Road Studios

Gramophone Group, a forerunner of British music company EMI, established Abbey Road Studios in 1931 as a classical music recording studio, expanding to jazz and big bands in the 1930s and 1940s, and eventually rock and roll in the 1950s. In 1962, though, it was a group of five young men known as the Beatles that would cause a stir. The Beatles called their GRAMMY-nominated 1969 album *Abbey Road*, the one with the iconic crosswalk illustration, as a nod to where much of their music was made, and it has become a household name. The GRAMMY-winning rock legends released 190 of their 210 songs there between 1962 and 1970, mostly in Studio 2 with GRAMMY-winning producer George Martin.

## Abbey Roads Studios notable engineers include:

### *Andrew Dudman*

Andrew has a Tonmeister music degree course at the University of Surrey and has established himself as one of the leading British film scoring engineers. Andrew won the Pro Sound News award for the engineer of the year in 2014 and a CAS award for sound mixing for Disney's "Brave."

### *Simon Rhodes*

Simon joined EMI Abbey Road Studios in 1987 after growing up in a musical family and graduating with a degree in Physics and Music. He is now a senior engineer and has worked with many composers over the years, collaborating on over 40 films, including *Avatar*, the second highest-grossing film of all time.

### *Chris Bolster*

Chris' engineering career started in 1995 at York Street Studios in New Zealand, where he was born. He collaborated with a wide range of artists in this space, and his love of retro vintage gear started with the studio's installation of the iconic 1974 EMI/NEVE Custom QUAD console.

## Artists that have made use of Abbey Road Studios:

- Kanye West
- Ed Sheeran
- Lady Gaga
- Kate Bush
- Shojon
- Adele
- Amy Winehouse
- Frank Ocean

At the PSN Pro Sound Awards, sponsored by Focusrite, Abbey Road Studios won the Best Studio Award in 2018.

# ARC Recording Studios

The ARC recording studio is situated on a wooded acreage in Hamilton, Ontario. Producer Julius Butty and studio manager Andrea Leslie own the facility. The studio has a huge live room that can host a full band when tracking drums. There are tie lines to the bathroom, kitchen, lounge, and garage to make the most of the rooms. There are even trees, and there are many outlets for creative expression.

## **ARC Recording Studios notable engineers include:**

### *Matt Taylor*

Matt joined the ARC team in 2019 as our in-house engineer, shortly after graduating with a BA (Hons) degree from the prestigious Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

### *Mark Tucker*

Mark is ARC Studios' studio manager, senior engineer, and house producer. He's worked with some of the biggest names in the UK's rock and folk scene.

## **Artists that have made use of ARC Recording Studios:**

- Kitty Macfarlane
- Francis Jackson
- James Dalton
- Simon Preston

At the 2019 Omaha Entertainment and Arts award ceremony, ARC Recording Studios was named Best Recording Studio.

# Castle of Doom Studios

Castle of Doom Studios is a recording studio in Glasgow, Scotland, founded in 2005 by record producer Tony Doogan and Mogwai. Scottish artist Mogwai and record producer Tony Doogan founded Castle of Doom in 2005. Originally a private workshop, it has expanded over the years to include a diverse group of local and international artists. Many top ten albums have been recorded and mastered at Castle of Doom Studios and soundtracks for award-winning TV shows and feature films.

## **Artists that have made use of Castle of Doom Studios:**

- Abigail Grey
- Alan Kelly
- Francis
- McDonald
- Paul Murphy
- Paul L Morgan

# CaVa Studios

CaVa Studios, also known as Ca Va Sound, is a specialist recording studio in Glasgow's West End. CaVa used to have offices in both Glasgow and Edinburgh. The studios were established in 1974 by Brian Young and his team. Since then, he's worked with some of the biggest names in the UK and internationally. The studio features a Neve VR Legend mixing console and PrismSound audio converters, making it the first studio in Scotland to do so.

Ca Va Sound also operates Scotland's only specialist independent mobile studio, which features a 48-track SSL4000E console and Pro Tools. The studio is named after founder Brian Young's former band, "Ca Va."

## Artists that have made use of CaVa Studios:

- David Byrne
- Take That
- Red Hot Chili Peppers
- Black Eyed Peas

# Capitol Studios

Built in 1956, Capitol Studios was initially reserved for Capitol Records artists until 1968. The studio ensures that it remains a cutting-edge facility by ensuring regular maintenance of equipment and renovations of the space.

The structure is 13 stories tall and stands 150 feet tall. It's a tower with an incredible cylindrical shape, and the studio is on the ground floor, in the only rectangular section of the building.

## **Capitol Studios notable engineers include:**

*Jonathan Chamberlain*

As a performer, music educator, and international touring musician, he has a wide range of skills and is a certified professional with a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Hartford in Music Management and Performance.

## **Artists that have made use of Capital Studios:**

- Michael Jackson
- Jay Z
- Miley Cyrus
- Snoop Dogg

Capitol Studios has a long history of producing Grammy Award-winning, world-class mixing.



# Church Studios

Is located in Crouch End, North London, England, in a former church. In the 1980s and 1990s, it was leased and then purchased by Dave Stewart, who used it to record Eurythmics' debut album Sweet Dreams. David Gray purchased the studio in 2004 until Paul Epworth, a leading UK music producer, bought and renovated it in 2013.

## Artists that have made use of Church Studios:

- Beyoncé
- Mumford & Sons
- James Bay
- The Corrs
- Blur
- Bob Dylan
- Depeche Mode
- Dido
- Erasure

# Electric Lady Studios

In 1968, Jimi Hendrix and his manager Michael Jeffery purchased The Generation, a newly defunct nightclub in Greenwich Village, New York, which Hendrix had frequented for impromptu concerts and late-night jam sessions. Big Brother & the Holding Company, B.B. King, Chuck Berry, Dave Van Ronk, and Sly & the Family Stone were among the legendary live acts of the Generation. Rather than renaming the club and proceeding with Jimi's original vision for the project, advisors Eddie Kramer and Jim Marron persuaded Hendrix to turn the room into a professional recording studio. Each structural detail was designed by architect John Storyk, the beginnings of New York's famous Electric Lady were born. At the time, it would be the only artist-owned recording studio in the world.

Electric Lady Studios is now revered as the most sacred ground for recorded music, thanks to Jimi Hendrix and classic 1970s sessions with The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Stevie Wonder, David Bowie, and Patti Smith, among others. It is New York City's oldest and most famous recording studio.

## Artists that have made use of Electric Lady Studios

- The Arcs
- Lana Del Rey
- The Kills
- Daft Punk
- Beck
- Ryan Adams
- Adele
- David Bowie

# IBC Studios

The International Broadcasting Company (IBC) was a recording studio in London, England, located at 35 Portland Place. The studios became globally popular in the 1960s and 1970s after being used by some of the world's most famous recording artists. In the late 1970s, Chas Chandler purchased the studios and renamed them Portland Recording Studios.

George Peckham's cutting rooms (Porky Prime Cuts) and Radiotracks Studios, a business specializing in recording and distributing radio commercials, were also located at this address. Don Arden bought it later, and his son David Arden ran it. Under Denis King's leadership, the studios produced most of their own equipment throughout their long history, particularly during its heyday as IBC. Radiotracks used the quadraphonic mixing desk built in the early 1970s in the late 1980s, albeit in a different building. The desk was designed to take advantage of quadraphonic technology, which was invented for music but never caught on, and the desk was never used for that purpose during its music days.

## IBC Studios notable engineers include:

*Glyn Johns*

In the 1960s, Johns began working as a recording studio engineer at IBC Studios working on projects produced and/or engineered with such artists as Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and in 2012 was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland. He was honored for musical excellence.

## Artists that have made use of IBC Studios include:

- The Action
- Adam Faith
- The Beatles
- The Bee Gees
- Billy J Kramer
- Duane Eddy
- Elton John
- The Equals
- Golden Earring

# Metropolis Studios

On the Chiswick high road, an independent recording studio with mastering services, production services, and activities – typically involving very reputable, well-known musicians. Metropolis, which opened in May 1989, was designed from the start to be Europe's leading commercial recording complex. The project began in 1984 with producers and recording executives who decided to incorporate the best aspects of the world's best recording studios.

The Chiswick Power House was discovered as part of a project. Built in 1901 to provide power for the London Tram System, it had been empty for nearly 70 years, serving only as storage. The vacant building offered an excellent shell to create an entirely new complex due to its vast empty hallways (the main hallway was 50 meters long, 20 meters wide, and 25 meters high), ample natural daylight, massive structure, and classic architecture.

## **Metropolis Studios notable engineers include:**

### *Tony Cousins*

Tony Cousins began his professional life as a musician. In 1980, he started as a cutting engineer at the Townhouse before moving on to become a full-fledged audio mastering engineer.

### *Stuart Hawkes*

Stuart Hawkes has been mastering audio for over 25 years. The expertise and experience he's gained during that period have made him highly sought after by many music producers, recording artists, and record labels worldwide.

### *John Davis*

In the late 1980s, John Davis started his career as an audio mastering engineer, cutting 12-inch singles for London club dancefloors. With labels including Ministry Of Sound, Boys Own, Classic, and Def Jam using his expertise.

## **Artists that have made use of Metropolis Studios include:**

- Jess Glynne
- David Guetta
- One Direction
- Queen
- Ed Sheeran
- Paloma Faith

At the 2020 MPG Awards, Metropolis Studios' Matt Colton was named Mastering Engineer of the Year. Matt has won this award three times.

# Miloco Studios

Miloco Studios is a collection of London-based recording studios. Miloco was created when three former London recording studios, Milo Music, The Garden, and Orinoco Studios, merged. Milo Music started in 1984 as a small studio in Hoxton Square, east London (commonly referred to as simply “The Square”), and was used by artists such as Tricky, M People, and The Brand New Heavies in its early years. They took over another building near The Square in the early 1990s and used it to construct seven programming suites for artists and producers to use for long periods.

## **Miloco Studios notable engineers include:**

### *Ben Jackson*

Billy Halliday is competent and adaptable, and Ben joined EMI Music Publishing as an in-house assistant engineer in 2006. During his time with Miloco, he has had the opportunity to work in a wide range of some of London’s finest studios.

### *Dan Moyler*

Was named Recording Engineer of the Year in 2020. The same year, Miloco engineer Darren Jones won the UK Song of the Year award for Stormzy’s Vossi Bop.

## **Artists that have made use of Miloco Studios include:**

- Stormzy
- Emeli Sande
- Skepta
- Sam Smith
- Sugababes
- Björk
- Franz Ferdinand
- Dizzee Rascal
- DJ Ironik

# Rockfield Studios

Rockfield Studios is a recording studio in Monmouthshire, Wales, just outside the village of Rockfield. Dave Edmunds' "I Hear You Knocking" was the first major hit released in the studios in 1970. The studios were used to record seven Budgie albums, three Hawkwind albums, one Hobo album, Peter Hammill's second solo album *Chameleon in the Shadow of the Night*, Ace's hit single "How Long" in 1974, and Queen's album *Sheer Heart Attack* in the early 1970s.

## **Rockfield Studios notable engineers include:**

Jack works at the famed Rockfield Studios as a Recording Engineer and Mixer. As an in-house engineer, he has worked with a variety of clients and ventures.

## **Artists that have made use of Rockfield Studios:**

- Bear's Den
- Chinaski
- Frost
- Bellowhead
- The Darkness
- Gwyneth Herbert
- Emma Blackery
- Frightened Rabbit
- Broken Hands

# Rolling Stones Mobile Studio

The Rolling Stones Mobile Studio is a former mobile recording studio owned by The English rock band Rolling Stones. When the Rolling Stones decided they wanted a new atmosphere to record music in 1968, they came up with the idea for the mobile studio. The Stones wanted to record new music at Mick Jagger's country house, Stargroves, in England. Since all of the required equipment had to be brought to the building, their road manager and pianist, Ian Stewart proposed placing a control room in a van.

## **Rolling Stones mobile studio notable engineers include:**

Ian Stewart contributed piano, organ, electric piano, and/or percussion to all Rolling Stones albums released between 1964 and 1986, except for *Their Satanic Majesties Request*, *Beggars Banquet*, and *Some Girls*.

## **Artists that have made use of Rolling Stones mobile studio include:**

- The Who
- Dire Straits
- Deep Purple
- Lou Reed
- Bob Marley
- Horslips
- Nazareth
- Fleetwood Mac
- Bad Company

The National Music Centre in Calgary has now acquired the unit since 2016.

# Sun Studios

Sun Studio, located at 706 Union Avenue in Memphis, Tennessee, was founded by rock and roll pioneer Sam Phillips on January 3, 1950. It was known initially as Memphis Recording Service, and it was located in the same building as the Sun Records label. Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats' "Rocket 88," allegedly the first rock and roll single, was recorded there in 1951 with song composer Ike Turner on keyboards, cementing the studio's claim to be the birthplace of rock & roll.

**Artists that have made use of Sun Studios are:**

- Johnny Cash
- Carl Perkins
- Charlie Rich
- Elvis Presley
- Warren Smith



# That SP Studios (TSS)

That SP Studios is a creative media hub located in London's Royal Borough of Greenwich, United Kingdom. It specializes in audio-visual production, broadcasting and music publishing. That SP Studios boasts an audio catalog of over 13,000 audio works and multi-millions of views on YouTube for visual works. It's early beginnings solely as a recording studio formerly known as "SP Studios" (or colloquially referred to as "SP's.") The studio was first conceptualized in 2006 by founder John Shownmi also known as Shojon - a British musician, sound engineer, songwriter, film producer, and entrepreneur.

The studio in 2021, renowned as a pillar of the Greenwich community by Readers Digest, has been home and starting to point to many musical careers. Recognized for actions helping youth creatives evade the issues of the Greenwich turf wars in the mid 2000s.

Afrikan Boy's "One Day I Went To Lidl" went viral in 2007, amassing over a million views on YouTube, one of the most viewed videos on the media platform at the time.

In 2012 the studio expanded into media production, creating YouTube Platform "Aftersessions" which features worldwide acts Shaggy, Trey Songz, and Sarkodie as well as popular UK acts Katy B, Wretch 32, Yungen, and Lethal Bizzle.

The studio has been able to gain much prominence in recent years following partnerships with local organizations and charities. Youth music business workshop with In2Music, the launch of RTM FM community Radio with Thamesmead Arts and Culture Office (TACO), as well as sponsoring Eltham Town Youth Football Club. In 2017 Kent artist M Dot R and Shojon created the annex *SP Studios Sheerness* providing work experience in association with the Prince's Trust. And in 2020, the studio managed the mental health fundraising campaign #Chocolateforthemind in aid of the Mind charity.

## That SP Studios notable engineers include:

### *Shojon*

Has been a personal engineer to many artists and worked in or created various other recording studios to gain his 15 Year experience in the industry. His Music executive work saw him curate shows for YouTube platforms and break new artists through live performance show "#NXTUP."

**Artists that have made use of That SP Studios Include:**

- Nu Brand Flexxx
- Zeph Ellis
- Wiley
- Lady Leshurr
- Bluey Robinson
- J Warner
- Blinkie
- Wiley
- No Lay
- Kuniva (D12)
- Cadet
- Samantha Mumba

# Trident Studios

Trident Studios was a British recording studio that operated from 1968 to 1981 at 17 St Anne's Court in London's Soho area. Norman Sheffield, drummer for the Hunters in the 1960s, and his brother Barry built it in 1967. Manfred Mann's "My Name Is Jack," recorded at Trident in March 1968, helped establish the studio's reputation. The Beatles released their song "Hey Jude" there later that year, which became part of their self-titled double album (also known as the "White Album"). Elton John's "Your Song," David Bowie's *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*, Carly Simon's *No Secrets*, and Queen's albums *Queen*, *Queen II*, and *Sheer Heart Attack* were all recorded at Trident.

## Artists that have made use of Trident Studios include:

- Bee Gees
- Chris de Burgh
- Frank Zappa
- Genesis
- Brand X
- James Taylor
- Joan
- Armatrading
- Joe Cocker

# Tileyard Studios

Tileyard Studios is the UK's largest professional music community. Over 70 state-of-the-art music studios and 100 businesses are housing a diverse range of companies in the music, film, television, fashion, and innovative new tech industries. A well-stocked live room is connected to a spacious, highly defined studio control room and a smaller production studio. Tileyard's network of business leaders will also provide you with mentoring opportunities.

Tileyard has built a beautiful world-class recording facility that includes a large control room and a live recording room. There are also tie lines to a production booth and a lecture room in the control room, which can be used as additional recording spaces. All rooms are acoustically outstanding and have been built with education in mind, with mood lighting throughout.

**Artists that have made use of Tileyard Studios include:**

- Mark Ronson
- Lady Gaga
- Mick Jagger
- Kanye West

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# Summary

Recording studios can have a wide range of applications, for that reason, whether choosing to visit a studio or building your own. You will first need to understand what is required from a recording facility to make your audio project and time management efficient and successful.

Whether you need a large recording environment to record a band or ensemble pieces or just solo vocals in an isolation booth, there can be vast cost differences between the two, so ensure you choose an environment suitable for your project needs as well as your budget!

By looking at the engineers, we can determine work styles and capable candidates for the job; experience can be key here but not always. An excellent place to start would be to listen to previous projects found in engineer portfolios and reach out to engineers that have a mix/sound similar to your audio project.

Studio managers and engineers are always happy to answer any questions you may have about their services, so always ask if unsure.

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# Further Reading

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<https://www.thechurchstudios.com/>

<https://milocostudios.com/>

<https://www.ibcstudio.com/>

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<https://www.airstudios.com/>

<https://www.capitolstudios.com/>

<https://www.thatsspstudios.com>



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# Glossary

## Acoustic

i - a sound audible by the human ear or the sense of hearing.

ii - pertaining to a musical instrument without electrical amplification, such as an acoustic guitar.

iii - pertaining to musicians playing musical instruments without electrical amplification.

iv - the properties or qualities of a room that determine how sound is transmitted within it.

v - a musical instrument without electrical amplification. (6) Referring to the acoustic recording method.

## Acoustical engineer

an engineer that works with sound and vibration and the applications of acoustics.

Acoustical engineers typically deal with the design, analysis, and control of sound.

## Acoustic-electric guitar

an acoustic guitar equipped with a pickup to amplify of the guitar signal. Often a piezo pickup is used, but sometimes a hybrid system is used that blends the signal from both a piezo pickup and an internal microphone.

## Acoustic treatment

various devices and methods used to control the sound properties (temporal, spectral, and spatial qualities) in a space. There are three main categories of acoustic treatment: (a) absorption, (b) diffusion, and (c) isolation. These treatments are used to control reflections and prevent sounds from interfering with one another and prevent sounds from entering or leaving the space (isolation).

## Analog recording

the process of recording analog audio for later playback as a continuous wave in or on an analog medium, such as grooves on a phonograph record or magnetic fluctuations on a magnetic tape, as opposed to digital recording, in which such information is stored as data.

## Analog-to-digital conversion

involves changing an analog signal into a digital signal containing essentially the same information, using an analog-to-digital converter—abbreviated as *AD conversion*, *A*, *A/D conversion*, and *A-to-D conversion*.

## Audio

i - Vibrations (sound waves) detectable by the human ear as sound. From the Latin *audio*, meaning “I hear.”

ii - Sound transmitted, recorded, reproduced, or broadcast, either acoustically, electrically, or digitally.

## Broadcast engineer

a person skilled in electrical and computer engineering working in either radio or television broadcasting. Broadcast engineers are also involved in audio engineering and radio frequency involved in both the studio and transmitter ends of the business and remote broadcasts.

**BSI Group**

the British standards organization responsible for producing standards and supplying standards-related services for the UK. It is known in the UK as the British Standards Institution (BSI).

**Control room**

the room in a recording studio that houses most of the equipment and where the engineer controls and monitors the recording process.

**Control surface**

a component that interfaces with a computer and is used to control the functions of a digital audio workstation (DAW).

**Damping**

- i - to suppress vibrations using an electrical or mechanical device.
- ii - the control of volume either decreases or silences the strings of an instrument after being played.
- iii - the decreasing amplitude of an electrical or mechanical wave due to friction and other forces.
- iv - the reduction of echoes and reverberations by using sound-absorbing material.

**Demo**

- i - a recording made to exhibit the capabilities of an artist, usually to obtain a contract with a label or to obtain a booking.
- ii - a recording made to present a new song, usually recorded by or for the songwriter to an artist or producer to induce an artist to record it. Short for *demonstration*.

**Digital microphone**

a microphone in which the analog signal is preamplified and converted to a digital signal using an analog-to-digital converter (ADC) within the microphone body. Digital microphones have lower noise and are less susceptible to electromagnetic interference than an equivalent analog microphone. See also *USB microphone*.

**Digital mixer**

an electronic device (mixing board or console) used to combine, route, and change digital audio signals' dynamics. Compared to analog mixers, digital mixers usually offer additional features, such as automation, presets, digital effects, and digital I/O.

**Drum kit**

a set of drums, cymbals, and other percussion instruments used by a drummer and played with drumsticks or brushes. A typical drum kit consists of a foot-operated kick drum (bass drum), a snare drum, hi-hat, one or more cymbals, and one to four tom-toms.

**Dynamic microphone**

a microphone that does not require a power source. There are two basic varieties of dynamic mics: (a) the moving coil microphone, usually referred to as a *dynamic microphone* and (b) the ribbon microphone. Each converts sound into an electric signal by causing vibration in a conductor within a magnetic field.

**Electrical era**

the portion of recorded music history from about 1925 to 1947. During this period, records were produced using electrical means. In 1947, the magnetic tape era began when audio was first recorded to tape before creating a disc.

**Engineer**

- i - to make an audio recording or to manage a live sound.
- ii - short for *audio engineer* or *recording engineer*, or *broadcast engineer*.

**Hardware**

- i - Physical parts of a computer system, such as storage devices, display, keyboards, printers, boards, and chips, as opposed to the computer programs and data, which are called *software*.
- ii - Studio equipment such as mixers, preamps, and outboard equipment, such as compressors, reverbs, or equalizers.

**Headphones**

devices that can be worn on the head that cover or surround the ears with small speakers or sound transducers that convey audio sound waves. There are several configurations of headphones: (a) over-ear earbuds, (b) in-ear headphones, (c) circumaural headphones, and (d) supra-aural headphones.

**Instrumentalist**

a musician who plays an instrument or instrumental music often distinguishes one from a vocalist.

**Label**

- i - a round paper disc in the center of a phonograph record provides the title, artist, manufacturer, and other information about the record.
- ii - a distinctive brand used by a record company to market its catalog of music.
- iii - the record company itself, also known as a *record label*.

**Mastering engineer**

- i - a person skilled in preparing and transferring recorded audio from the final mix to a master. The process involves adjusting levels and adding compression, limiting, and equalization when necessary, to produce a polished sound. The mastering engineer places tracks in the desired order and inserts appropriate spacing between tracks.
- ii - a vinyl mastering engineer.

**Microphone**

a transducer that converts sound waves into an electrical signal. There are several types of microphones, including the carbon microphone, condenser microphone, crystal microphone, dynamic microphone, moving coil microphone, and ribbon microphone. Carbon microphones and crystal microphones normally are not used in professional recording studios. Other microphone types do exist designed for specific applications not generally associated with recording studios.

**Mix engineer**

an audio engineer responsible for combining or mixing the various tracks (vocals, instruments, effects, etc.) of a recording session into a final version of a song, called the mix down or final mix.

**Mixing**

the process of combining the audio signals from a multitrack recording into a single mono track, two stereo tracks, or several surround sound tracks while adjusting levels and panning and adding effects such as equalization, compression, and reverberation to produce the desired sound.

## Monitor

- i - to listen.
- ii - a loudspeaker used to listen and analyse sound.
- iii - a loudspeaker that allows musicians on stage to hear the music. Also called a *stage monitor* or *floor monitor*.
- iv - to observe a process or activity to evaluate or maintain quality.
- v - a computer screen or visual display that allows a user to interface with a computer.
- vi - A video screen used to view what is being filmed or broadcast.

## Musical composition

- i - an original piece of music with a melody but may or may not have lyrics. Music with lyrics is called a *song*, while one without lyrics is called an *instrumental* or by the somewhat ambiguous term *instrumental song*. The term is often used in copyright law to distinguish the music from the sound recording.
- ii - the structure of a musical piece.
- iii - the process of creating or writing a new song or piece of music. People who create new compositions are called composers or songwriters. The person who writes the words for a song is called the lyricist.

## Record

- i - to store data or audio signals in an analog or digital format for subsequent reproduction or broadcast, such as magnetic signals on magnetic tape, digital data on a hard disk drive, or optical data on an optical disk.
- ii - A flat disc usually made of vinyl onto which grooves have been placed that reproduce music or other audio.

## Recording engineer

a person skilled in techniques of recording, mixing, reproducing, and amplifying sounds, whether live or in the studio.

## Record label

- i - a round paper disc (label) in the center of a phonograph record that provides the title, artist, manufacturer, and other information about the record.
- ii - a distinctive brand used by a record company to market its catalog of music.
- iii - the record company itself. A record label coordinates the production, manufacture, distribution, marketing, and promotion of sound recordings, seeks out and develops new talent (A&R), and manages contracts with recording artists. Sometimes a label also operates a publishing company that manages and enforces the copyright of music.

## Reverberance

having the character or quality of being resonant or having many reverberations and echoes.

## Score

- i - sheet music, either printed or handwritten, using standard music notation and symbols.
- ii - to write music using normal music notation.
- iii - music composed to accompany and create ambiance as well as mood to a video production. Also called a *film score*, *underscore*, *background music*, or *soundtrack music*.

## Solid State Logic, Ltd. (SSL)

a company founded in 1969 by Colin Sanders and headquartered in Beggins, Oxfordshire, UK, builds high-end mixing consoles and recording studio hardware.

**Studio engineer**

a specialist skilled in the use and techniques of recording, mixing, and reproducing sounds in a recording studio.

**Studio monitors**

loudspeakers specifically designed for accurate reproduction of audio in recording studios. They are designed to produce a relatively flat phase and frequency response, so that there is minimal coloration of the sound. Unlike a high-fidelity speaker, which is designed to sound good often by boosting both the low end and high end, a studio monitor needs to have a neutral tonal balance, which is especially important during the mixing process.

**Vacuum tube**

an electrical device containing electrodes and a heated filament inside an evacuated container (usually made of glass) that rectifies, amplifies, or otherwise modifies an electric signal.

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# REVERENCE IN MUSIC

Ed O'Malley

Reverence in music delves into iconic recording studios around the world to understand what makes a recording studio "Great."

The history of the recording studio, its digital evolution, and the impact recording facilities (including Metropolis, Miloco, and That SP Studios) have had on the music industry. Numerous insights are shown into studio facilities, equipment and notable engineers that made careers there. Included are quotes and tips from world renowned record producers on how to make the best of a recording session. These insights will enlighten and inspire students of the recording arts, music fans, and anyone interested in the legacies of these great studios, artists, and music-professionals that have had a hand in making modern recording what it is today.

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